

Make or break ABM

How to unlock **BUSINESS GROWTH** and avoid common pitfalls

The paradox

99%

say ABM delivers
success

but only...

25%

have embedded
it business wide

and...

40%

lack the talent to
execute properly



About me

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Rethink.



Re-engineer.



Rebuild.



The paradox

THE REALITY:

600 CMOs
ABM Pulse

THE BREAKING POINTS:

Why ABM fails.

THE SUCCESS FRAMEWORK:

How to make
it work.

Modern commissioned Censuswide to survey 611 CMOs in B2B companies (employee size 1000-10000) across UK and US in October 2024.
In-depth interviews *n.3* with an expert panel of global ABM leaders held in October 2024.



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The reality



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The maturity gap

~25%

At strategy
or pilot
stage

~50%

Stuck in
scaling or
building out

25%

Embedded

“ Most organisations are stuck
on the middle rungs



Three critical gaps

KNOWLEDGE GAP:

- **68%** lack strong knowledge

ALIGNMENT GAP:

- **25%+** struggling with sales engagement
- Ownership fragmented

MEASUREMENT GAP:

- **39%** can't prove it's working
- **27%** can't write a business case
- MQLs focus



The barriers are operational

39%

wrong org structures or reporting lines

39%

lack people with ABM experience

40%

lack of appropriate technology

34%

no external support

“

The strategy isn't the problem - **execution and structure** are



What breaks ABM



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Breaking points

UNDEFINED STRATEGY

“ We're doing ABM but can't explain how it's different from demand gen.

- No shared definition of what ABM means
- **Result:** Lost metrics, no buy-in, hard to prove value



Breaking points

MARKETING DRIVES ALONE

“ We've seen this fail time and again - it's only one side of the coin.

- Sales is "informed" not aligned
- Campaigns in isolation



Breaking points

WRONG TIMELINE EXPECTATIONS



The biggest problem is that we don't know what good looks like. So after six months without results for the board, panic sets in.

- **Expectation:** 3-6 months
- **Reality:** Pipeline 10-14 mths, ROI ~18 months
- Programme killed before it proves value



Breaking points

TECH-FIRST STRATEGY-SECOND



Buy the tech. Follow the playbook.

- ABM platform vendors define your approach
- Technology dictates instead of enables



Breaking points

MEASUREMENT MISMATCH



There is a conflict. Right now my KPIs and therefore focus is around net-new leads and MQLs

- Using demand gen KPIs (MQLs/SQLs)
- Can't demonstrate value → lose exec support
- **Missing:** Account-level engagement metrics



So what separates success from failure?



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Success traits

ABM AS BUSINESS STRATEGY

- Executive sponsorship across sales/marketing/CS
- Shared objectives, not marketing tactics
- Often renamed: "Key Account Accelerator" or "ABX"

“ We're definitely trying to position it as account-based experience... it doesn't just sit with sales and marketing.



Success traits

TRUE SALES-MARKETING HARMONY

- Shared account selection + joint planning
- Give sales clear intel, not platform complexity

“ Run the data side, hand over insights



Success traits

RIGHT MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

- **C-Suite:** Long view (value, growth, account development)
- **Programme leads:** Regular (revenue, pipeline, performance)
- **Frontline:** Real-time (engagement signals, buying stage)

“ It's like the lights have come on. **CLOUDPAY CMO** ”



Success traits

COORDINATED EXECUTION

- **Centre of Excellence for global coordination**
- ABM extends beyond sales/marketing → events, content, PR, CS
- Local autonomy within central frameworks

“ ABM is at the crossing of all the different functions, even beyond marketing.



Success traits

INVESTMENT IN CAPABILITY

- Partner with ABM specialists + training providers
- Build certifications + consistent methodologies
- Develop Centres of Excellence
- **RESULT:** Unified approach, reduced fragmentation



By partnering with established ABM experts and training providers, successful organisations ensure their staff develop skills consistently



The Make or Break Framework

Your diagnostic checklist:

WHAT BREAKS ABM?

- Undefined strategy
- Marketing-only ownership
- Unrealistic timelines
- Tech-first approach
- Wrong metrics

WHAT MAKES IT WORK?

- Business-wide strategy
- Sales-marketing harmony
- Realistic expectations
- Strategy-led tech
- Account level measurement



What to do next

STARTING OUT?

→ Pilot + people
+ agile mindset

STUCK SCALING?

→ Third-party
assessment +
embedding framework

NEED PROOF?

→ Time-to-value
alignment + exec
metrics

“ ABM isn't broken. But how we implement it often is.



Resources

